

Commercial and Industrial Buildings,
Key City Electric Street Railway Company
Powerhouse and Storage Barn
Eighth and Washington Streets
Dubuque
Dubuque County
Iowa

HABS No. IA-160-AT

HABS
IOWA,
31-DUBU,
13-AT-

**PHOTOGRAPHS
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

Historic American Buildings Survey
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
P.O. Box 25287
Denver Colorado 80225

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Site Location: Eighth and Washington Streets
Dubuque, Dubuque County, Iowa
DOT designation: Resource Site No. 8.28
Cadastral grid : SW1/4 SW1/4 S19 T89N R3E
USGS quadrangle: Dubuque South Iowa 7.5'
Lot dimensions : 106'x 290': .70 acre
Lot description: Lot I, Midwest Lumber
Company Place

Present Owner: Iowa Department of Transportation
Present Usage: warehouse
Present Condition : fair

Overall Dimensions: 56'x 197'x 172'; one story
Orientation : north
Architectural Plan type : trapezoidal open-plan warehouse
Description : Foundation: coursed limestone perimeter walls with
concrete slab floor.
Structure : wood frame with masonry bearing walls.
Ext. walls: common red brick laid in common bond.
Roof : flat composition roof with brick parapet
walls and terra cotta tile copings.
Chimneys : none visible.
Windows : west elevation - 6/6 double hung sash, some
boarded up or recent smaller windows installed
in original openings, lug sills, segmental
brick arch lintels. North wall - windows on
far left bay are fixed, 1 light with concrete
lug sills and segmental arches made from three
headers. Third bay windows are single, 6/6
light with concrete lug sills and segmental
arch lintels that are double headers. In the
first two bays of this facade the windows are
paired, 2/2 double hung with concrete lug
sills and triple double headers. South wall -
windows are bricked up, but have segmental
arch lintels and are the same configuration as
the west facade. Southeast wall - windows are
bricked or boarded over. Visible sashes indi-
cate that these windows were also 6/6 with lug
sills and segmental brick arches.

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Openings : remaining openings are on north front. Two are garage doors in the first and third bays. also in the third bay is a single door with 1 light (now boarded) and three cross panels. There is a recent door in the fourth bay with a sidelight on the right. This door was inserted into a once larger arched doorway, that had a segmental arch of triple headers.

Details : corbeled brick panels in parapet of north wall.

Construction Date : 1889

Architecture Style: 19th Century Functional

Physical History : Early in 1889 David H. Ogden secured a franchise from the City of Dubuque for an inner-urban railway along Eight Street, following the route of a previous steam-powered line, the Hill Street and West Dubuque Steam Railway. Called the Key City Electric Street Railway Company and capitalized with \$75,000 (primarily from investors in Cedar Rapids and Chicago), the firm laid new tracks and strung electric wires the following year along the route. At the tracks' eastern terminus immediately west of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad, the company constructed a single-story brick building to function as a car barn and powerhouse for his line. A boiler in the building's southeast room powered an electric dynamo in an adjacent room. A large room immediately east housed the trolley cars. The first electric car ran on Eighth Street on Christmas Day, 1889, before an enthusiastic gathering. The Key City Electric Street Railway Company continued operations until 1893, when the company was acquired at auction by the Allen & Swiney Company, which also controlled the Dubuque Electric Railway, Light and Power Company. By 1909 the E.G. Vogenthaler Architectural Iron Works occupied the powerhouse portion of the building; the car barn became a furniture warehouse. As the structure was added onto on three sides, its footprint more than tripled. The building has served as a warehouse for subsequent businesses, including the Martin-Strelau Transfer Company, whose name painted on the front can still be seen faintly. It still functions as a warehouse today. In 1986 it was acquired by the Iowa Department of Transportation for demolition in preparation for highway construction.

Significance: Beginning with Dubuque Street Railway Company in 1867, Dubuque's central business district and outlying residential neighborhoods were served by a series of steam and electric trolley lines. Though its success was limited by its short route, the Key City Electric Street Railway Company was historically significant as the first electrically powered line in the city. This building is thus important for its association with that railway line.

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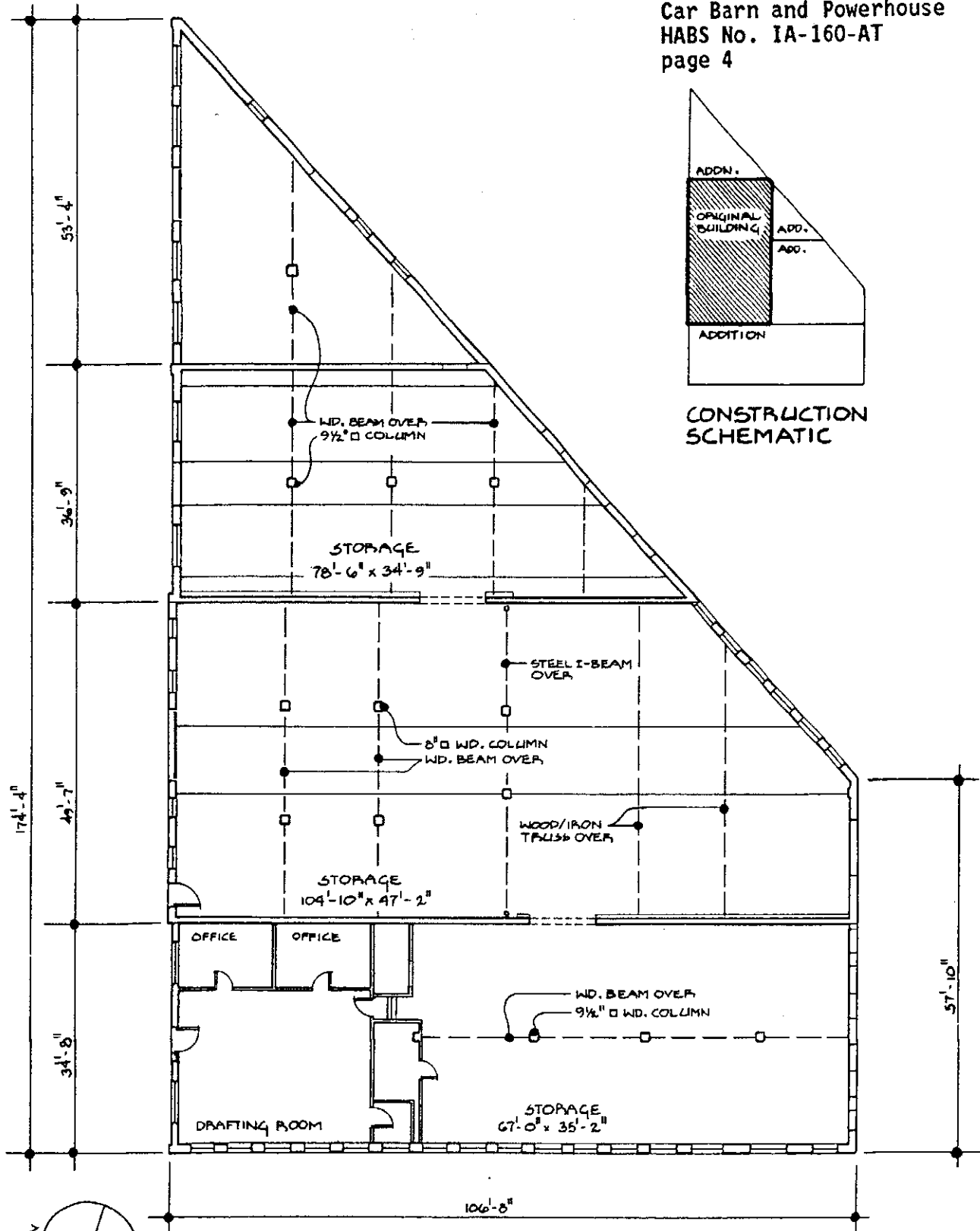
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KEY CITY ELECTRIC RAILWAY COMPANY

POWERHOUSE AND STORAGE BARN

EIGHTH AND WASHINGTON STREET • DUBUQUE • IOWA